MyPyramid and MyPlate Recommended Servings

Grains The grain group of foods consists of foods that are made from grains, whether they are common grains such as wheat, oats, rice, or corn , or whether they are less common such as quinoa. Breads, cakes and pastries, granola bars, spaghetti and French toast all fit into this category. For good health, 6 servings per day are recommended. A serving size is 1 ounce (oz.), about the size of a normal slice of bread. At least half of the grains that you eat should be whole grains (not refined), but more than half is even better! Grains are energy foods.

Vegetables Five, ½ cup servings per day are suggested for the vegetable group which consists of many different varieties and flavors. You should eat at least some dark green or yellow (orange) vegetables every day for good health.

In addition to vitamins, vegetables are a good source of fiber (especially if eaten raw) which helps to prevent colon cancer.

Fruits Eat a wide variety of these foods each day, including melons, berries, apples, citrus and countless others. They are packed full of vitamins and carbohydrates that we use for energy. Four servings are recommended each day and a serving size is ½ cup.

Dairy In this food group, a serving size is 1 cup (8 oz.). It is good to eat or drink three servings per day to get the amount of calcium that you need to build strong bones and teeth. Be careful, though, dairy products contain fat (cream) and cholesterol. Low-fat and fat-free varieties (such as skim milk and fat-free yogurt) are available and these should be used instead of full-fat types such as whole milk , gourmet ice cream and heavy whipping cream.

Protein Foods Meats, nuts, seeds, eggs and legumes (dry beans, peas and peanuts) make up the meat group, sometimes called the “protein” group of foods. Use lean cuts of meat and avoid eating large amounts of red meats such as beef. The recommended amount is only 2 servings per day and the size of a serving is 3 ounces (oz.), about the size of a deck of cards!

Fats (Oils) It is suggested that you eat foods from this group sparingly (use very little). In general, if you eat a wide variety of foods, you will get all of the fats and sweets that your body needs without adding more servings. “Empty calorie” foods fit into this group. They are high in calories but low in nutrients. Chocolate cake with frosting, candy bars and butter fit into this group. Use oils as much as possible instead of solid fats.